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SOME MATERIALS FOR SOUTHWESTERN HISTORY IN
THE ARCHIVO GENERAL DE MEXICO.

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A little more than a year ago there appeared in *The Nation*¹ a description of the contents of the first thirty-two volumes of the history section of the Archivo General y Público de la Nación housed in the Palacio Nacional at the City of Mexico. The historical introduction to the article made it plain that these thirty-two volumes, known as the *Colección de Memorias de Nueva España*, far from being identical and co-extensive with the Archivo General, form only a small fraction² of the great mass of manuscripts properly known by that name, and thus cleared up a point in bibliography upon which a prominent historian, if no one else, had fallen into confusion. During the past summer I examined thirty-one additional volumes, Nos. 33 to 62, inclusive, and No. 100, taken out of order, to ascertain their contents, and more especially to find what they contain bearing on the history of the Southwest. Some of the results in the latter particular, with the emphasis upon matter relating to Texas, will be stated here, those of a more general bearing being reserved for another place.

Owing partly to the different circumstances attending their collection, the general character of the introductory volumes of the Sección de Historia is somewhat different from that of those that follow. The first thirty-two are a systematic compilation, made for a definite purpose within a short space of time, and have a certain unity and completeness; succeeding volumes have accumulated gradually, in fulfillment of a more general purpose, and as a result are less organized and unified in character than the foregoing, manuscripts in them having very little relation to each other often being bound together. Some of the volumes are even fragmentary in make-up. A second difference, probably to be

¹May 30, 1901. An article by Professor George P. Garrison, entitled "The Archivo General de Mexico."

²The Sección de Historia, only one of the smaller of about twenty branches of the Archivo General, alone contains 335 bound volumes of manuscripts.

explained in the same way, is that the papers in the first volumes are, on the whole, of more general interest, though not necessarily of more value, than subsequent ones, which often are of local bearing. It is to be noted also, that whereas the first thirty-two volumes are composed entirely of copies, in those that follow a goodly portion of the manuscripts are original. Though not a little of the material is the same in both parts of the collection, probably many gaps left open by the earlier volumes are filled by the later ones.

More than half the volumes that I examined contain more or less material on Southwestern history, some original and much unprinted. It may be divided roughly into that bearing (1) on Texas and Louisiana, (2) on Nuevo Mexico, and (3) on the explorations and missionary work of the far Southwest. It will be convenient to consider these divisions in the order given.

Of the sources described in the article referred to a considerable part relate to the history of Texas, volumes 27 and 28, *Documentos para la Historia Eclesiástica y Civil de la provincia de Texas*, for example, being devoted exclusively to that subject, and containing papers of great importance. Examination proved that the succeeding volumes also contain material on Texas, equally extensive, and some of it of considerable value; though no additional sources were encountered of such general interest as some in the earlier numbers. Apart from the incidental references to Texas in the extensive material bearing on Nuevo Mexico and upon the Southwest as a whole, volume 51 deals exclusively with Texas, and 100 nearly so; 43 is devoted entirely to Texas and Louisiana; while a number of papers relating to Texas history are found scattered through other volumes. The most important groups of this material deal with the history of Bucareli (the settlement of which Nacogdoches was the continuation), the Texas-Louisiana boundary, commercial relations between Texas and Louisiana in the later eighteenth century, surveys made between Santa Fé and various Texas points in 1787-8, and the status of Laredo and Dolores in 1757, shortly after their foundation. While most of the papers are in the form of official copies, hence reasonably trustworthy, only a small part are original. Indeed, a much smaller portion of the material found on Texas is original than on a number of other subjects. The natural query is, Where are the origi-

nals? which is a hard question to answer, and for most of the papers it will probably remain unanswered; but the large number of copies made in Chihuahua afford at least a hint that possibly the archives of that city might be a fruitful field to search.

Coming now in some detail to individual sources, those in volume 51, which deals exclusively with Texas, may be put first. The volume is entitled *Téjas, Varios Asuntos de esta Provincia, 1780 á 1807*, and is made up of seven documents, some of which contain correspondence several years earlier than the dates in the title would indicate. The first paper¹ relates to Indian affairs and the promotion of trade in 1776. The remaining six, comprising about two hundred folios written on both sides, relate to the establishment, progress, abandonment, and re-establishment of the pueblo de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli.² They contain much unused material on this important episode of Texas history. All of the papers in this volume were copied from official records in Chihuahua in 1807 by Fr. José María Rosas, a government secretary. For purposes of reference and more fully to indicate the character of the material they contain, I give in the notes the titles of the documents.³

¹*Expediente Sobre Proposiciones del Gobernador de Texas, Baron de Ripperda, para erección de un nuevo Presidio, y Emprehender una Cruda Guerra contra los Apaches, Lipanes, haciendo Alianza con los Naciones del Norte*, 104 folios, dated 1776. Most of the material relates to 1772-3. Titles given here are, in all but one instance, taken from the documents themselves, instead of from the "indices" at the beginnings of the volumes, which are rather descriptions than titles of the documents.

²For references on Bucareli see Bancroft, *North Mexican States and Texas*, I 631; Raines, *A Bibliography of Texas*, 264.

³2. (Numbered continuously with the document named in note 1 above.) *Expediente Sobre el Establecimiento del Pueblo de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli, su abandono, comercio con los Indios Gentiles del Norte, y destino de los Vecinos del Extinguido Presidio de los Adaes*, 73 folios, 1774. 3. *Expediente Sobre que al Vecindario del Pueblo de Ntra. Señora del Pilar de Bucarely se le destine, Parroco, por cuenta de la Real Hacienda*, 21 folios, 1779. 4. *Los Vecinos del Extinguido Presidio, y Poblacion de los Adaes, hasta el Numero de sesenta y tres, que sin establecimiento alguno se hallan agregados al de San Antonio de Bexar, y Villa de San Fernando; sobre que atendiendo al infeliz estado, en que han quedado, por haver abandonado sus cosas y Tierras; y á la felicidad con que han servido, y estan prontos, a continuar sirviendo a S. M. en aquella Frontera, se les conceda por el Senor Gobernador el Jefe, y Comandante*

Volume 43 is entitled *Luisiana*, but deals largely with Texas also. It consists of twenty-nine manuscripts, which may be put roughly into three groups, exclusive of one document that stands by itself. The first bears upon the boundaries of Louisiana, with special reference to that between Louisiana and Texas. In it are the papers, comprising the first seven numbers of the volume and occupying about 120 folios, collected by Melchor de Talamantes, while commissioner appointed by the viceroy, Yturrigaray, in January, 1807, to report upon this subject. The papers, grouped into eight *opusculos*, contain a great variety of material, such as correspondence between Talamantes and Yturrigaray; memoranda of archives and libraries to be consulted by the commissioner; and annotated extracts from Espinosa's *Crónica Apostólica*, Mezières's *Cartas*, royal *cédulas*, and letters patent. They contain, also, compilations by Talamantes based upon these and various other sources. Besides these papers of Talamantes, numbers 12 and 20-29, inclusive, bear upon the same subject. They consist of official *carpetas*, instructions to military commanders, historical essays, and geographical notes. Some of the papers in this group have very little value, but others are of more importance. The main interest in the collection made by Talamantes is in his own notes and correspondence, as his sources are for the most part well known and accessible.¹ The collection as a whole would prove

General, algun establecimiento para que quedan Subsistir con sus Familias, 32 folios, dated 1783, but containing earlier correspondence. 5. *Representación de la Justicia de la Poblacion de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli; sobre libertad de Diezmos para aquellos Moradores*, 10 folios, covering 1777-1779. 6. *Expediente Sobre el abandono del Pueblo de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli*, *Quaderno 5*, 53 folios, 1778-1780. 7. *Expediente Sobre el abandono del Pueblo de Bucareli y establecer Comercio con los Indios Gentiles del Norte*, *Quaderno 6*, 1780-1781.

¹The titles of the Talamantes papers are as follows: 1. *Límites y extension de la Louisiana. Discurso publicado en dha. Provincia en la Gazeta de Natchez del Martes 23 de Diciembre de 1806. Copiado, traducido, y anotado por Fr. Melchor de Talamantes, en Mayo de 1808.* The article copied occupies 10 folios and Talamantes' *Notas* fill 14. In this number is also contained his correspondence with Yturrigaray, 18 folios. 2. *Historia del Descubrimiento y población de la Provincia de Tejas hasta al año de 1730. Escrito por el Pe. Fr. Melchor de Talamantes*, 16 folios. This is made up of 32 paragraphs extracted from Espinosa's *Crónica Apostólica*. 3. *Extracto de las cartas de Dn. Atanasio de Mezières*,

worthy of the attention of special students of Louisiana and Texas boundary questions.¹

A second group of papers in volume 43, comprising numbers 8, 10, 11, and filling over two hundred folios, are *expedientes* and *autos* treating of commercial relations between the provinces of Texas and Louisiana during the period 1774-1790. Most of this group, like those of the foregoing, are certified by Antonio Bonilla, the author of the *Breve Compendio*. They contain a brief *relación particular* of each of the jurisdictions of Texas,² official correspondence between Caballero de Croix and José de Galvez;³ José de Galvez and the viceroy; Caballero de Croix and Antonio Flores; Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga and Baron Ripperdá; and Ripperdá and Bucareli. The subjects of correspondence are the possible industries of Texas, the existing trade in horses between that province and Louisiana; the advisability of extending trade relations between the two provinces⁴ and of establishing a new commercial port and a new frontier; and complaints of the relations of the French and English to the Indians. A large part of this interesting material is apparently unpublished and unused.⁵ It would

formado por el...Dn. Fr. Melchor de Talamantes, 6 folios. 4. *Breve extracto histórico de la Conquista de la Luisiana por los Franceses*, taken from M. Richer's *Histoire Moderne*, 8 folios, annotated. 5. Extracts from Le Clerq's *Histoire des Colonies Françaises* (Paris, 1692) followed by eight folios of "Observaciones" by Talamantes. No title given. 6. *Reflexiones sobre la Real Cédula del Señor Dn. Carlos II Dirigida al Virrey de Nueva España* relative to settlement of Espíritu Santo Bay. It also contains reflections on Louis XIV's letters patent to La Salle. 7. *Plan de la Obra que se esta preparada en desempeño de la comisión sobre investigar los verdaderas límites occidentales de la Provincia de la Luisiana*, by Talamantes, together with others of his notes and correspondence, 15 folios. Of the other papers on Louisiana No. 25 is entitled *Representación hecha a su Magd. sobre límites de la Luisiana con motivo de haber pedido un socorro el Governador del Nuevo Orleans*, 7 folios, 1756 or 1757, by Angel Martos de Navarrete, governor of Coahuila.

¹They have already been used to some extent. See the article by Mr. I. J. Cox in this number.—EDITOR QUARTERLY.

²Dated at Chihuahua in 1778.

³Much of it based on Mezières's *Cartas*.

⁴Croix's three plans are discussed.

⁵Some, but by no means all, of this correspondence may be included in the papers of Bucareli, Flores, Galvez, and Ripperdá cited by Bancroft

seem to be sufficient to form the basis for a good study on the period and topic with which it deals.¹

The third class of documents, comprising numbers 13-19, consists of a number of diaries recording journeys made to survey the roads and ascertain the distances from Santa Fé to San Antonio de Béjar and other points to the east, in 1787-1788. There are copies of the instructions, diaries, and *derroteros* of Santiago Fernandez, José Mares Cabo Ymbalido, Francisco Xavier Fragoso, and Pedro Vial, all copied from official papers in Chihuahua in 1793-4 by Manuel Merino. If any of these have been printed, I do not know it.

Document No. 9 in the same volume is a copy of Bonilla's *Breve Compendio*, another copy of which is in volume 27. A comparison of a few pages of the two shows many differences, the cases of apparent omission and incompleteness usually being chargeable to the copy in volume 27.² It is not altogether improbable that by a careful comparison of the several copies of this important work now known to exist, it could be determined which is nearest the original and all could be improved.

Volume 100, entitled *Registro de varios expedientes y algunas acusaciones, 1788-1796*, to which my attention was called by chance, also relates largely to Texas. It contains documents touching upon the state of several missions, accusations against Antonio Gil Ybarbo, Teniente de Gobernador at Nacogdoches, and other papers of varied character.³ Other papers on Texas history (of which little has been printed). Most of that cited refers to dates earlier than this. See *North Mexican States and Texas*, I xxii, xxviii, xxix, xli; Mexico, I xxxii, xcvi.

¹The titles of these documents are: 8. *Expediente Sobre Comercio reciproco entre las Provincias de la Louisiana y Texas; Havilitacion de un Puesto en la costa de esta; ampliación de limites de la primera; extendiendo los hasta el Rio de Sabinas, y otras puntos incidentes*, 142 folios. 10. *Expediente sobre comercio reciproco entre las Provincias de la Luisiana y Tejas*, dated January 10, 1776, folios 19. 11. *Esplicación. Para el reconocimientto de la costa de Sotavento desde la pasa del Sur-oeste del Rio Misicipi asta la Bahia de San Bernardo, etc.*, 40 folios.

²The copy is in the same hand as the documents certified by Antonio Bonilla, but this one is not certified, and the date of making the copy is not given. It is annotated by Pe. Fr. Manuel Vega.

³This volume was not examined as carefully as the others, nor were titles copied.

are scattered through the remaining volumes examined; for example, in No. 37, entitled *Presidos* [sic], *Pagos de Soldados*, is a collection of *autos* relating to the possession of churches and convents of the El Paso district just at the close of the eighteenth century; while in volumes 53-56, a series entitled *Tamaulipas*, are contained official descriptions of Dolores and Laredo in 1757, settlements in what was then Nuevo Santander.¹ In volume 42, entitled *Misiones*, which is a report made in 1793² on the State of the missions, paragraphs 187-236, occupying ten folios, are on the missions of Texas.

What the remaining 273 volumes have of interest for students of Texas history can be learned only by patient investigation, but the amount is probably considerable. The interests of historical work on Texas would be greatly promoted were it possible to make some arrangement by which to systematically seek out, sift, copy, edit, and publish the more important sources of Texas history which this large collection contains.

On the history of Nuevo Mexico there is in these volumes a large amount of material, to a considerable extent original, and much of it unpublished.³ Three volumes (37, 38, 39) deal exclusively with that province during the years 1690-1697, the period occupied by Vargas's reconquest. Volume 37, *Presidos, Pagos de*

¹In March, 1757, Don Joseph Tienda de Cuervo, captain of dragoons at Vera Cruz, and Don Agustín Lopez, lieutenant-colonel of the royal cavalry, and an engineer, were commissioned to make a survey of the colony of Nuevo Santander. The original results of the surveys or "*Inspecciones*" are contained in volumes 55 and 56; vol. 54 is made up of Cuervo's summary report to the viceroy; while No. 53 contains the report of Lopez, entitled *Descripción General*. All these are original. A copy was made of those relating to Laredo. They may be translated and published in the future.

²December 27. A report made in consequence of a royal order of January, 1784, to the viceroy. This report has been printed entire in *Diccionario Universal de Historia y de Geografía*. Mexico, 1853-56. 4to. 10 vols.

³Of the first thirty-two volumes, 2, 3, and 25 relate to Nuevo Mexico. The material in volumes 2 and 3 is printed in *Documentos para la Historia de Mexico*, 3d series, IV 113-208. A copy of the same, Bancroft cites as the *Archivo de Nuevo Mexico*. See his *Arizona and New Mexico*, 20, 197.

Soldados, contains six numbers relative to Vargas's operations.¹ Volume 38, *Restauración de la Nueva Mexico*, contains papers of the same general description. Conspicuous among them are fifteen orders of the superior government to Zapata. They are in the original, containing the signature of Conde de Galvez, and appear to be unpublished.² They cover the period from May 28, 1692, to July 29, 1695. A large part of the remainder of the volumes is occupied by a collection of original military documents covering the years 1693 and 1694.³ Volume 39, on whose title-

¹*Testim'o de difer'tes Recados Sobre la paga de 22,500 p's*, being correspondence between Don Diego de Vargas Zapata and Don Pedro Rodriguez Cubero, referring to payment of soldiers at El Paso and Santa Fé, 38 folios. 2. *Autos sobre la Union de Armas de las Prov's de Sinaloa, Sonora y Paso del Rio del Norte*, by Don Juan Fernandez de la Fuente, 46 folios. This document begins with the date 26 May, 1691. Some of the papers are signed in the hand of Vargas. 3. *Auttos y diligenzias que en Cumplimiento de la Carta Original que en ellas Consta del Ex'mo. Señor Virrey Conde de Galvez, hizó.....el Govern'r y Capp'an General del R'no de la Nueva Mex'co por su Magestad, 1691*, folios 134, mostly original. Signed by Vargas, Galvez, and others. 4. *Autos de Posess'n de las yglesias y Conv'tos asi en este Pue'o del passo del rrio del norte Como en los demas de su distrito pedidos por el M. R'do Pe. Fr. Fran'o de Vargas.....en el mes de Ag'to de 1691*. 71 folios. This contains mainly original papers of the years 1691-2. 5. *Auttos de Guerra de la Camp'a y Conq'to del R'no de la nu'a Mexico que mediante el favor Divino y a su Costa a Conseguido Don Diego de Vargas Zapata, 1692.....folios 169*. About one-fourth of this is made up of original papers. 6. *Testim'o de la Visita y Lista personal de los vec'os que para Poblados del Reyno nuevamente Conquistado de la nu'a Mexico y su Villa de Santa Feé se hallan Vivir en este Pueblo del Passo del Rio del norte y su distrito Hho para Remitir al Ex'mo S'or Virrey Conde de Galvez per Don Diego de Vargas Zapatta, 1693*, folios 35.....This and many of the other papers in this volume are in the hand of Alphonso Rael de Aguilar, secretario de Gobierno y Guerra.

In printing the above titles it has been impossible to reproduce in type the exact form of the manuscript. The apostrophes here used to indicate omissions did not occur in the original. In each word containing an apostrophe, the letters following it were written in small hand and some distance above the line, as in the following example: Sor.—EDITOR QUARTERLY.

²*Quince Mandamientos de este Superior Gobierno Dirigidos para la Restauración del Reyno de la Nueva Mexico fha. por Dn. Diego de Vargas Zapata y Lujan*, 68 folios.

³*Testimonios de las Guerras de la Reconquista del Reyno y Provincia de la Nueva Mejico, hecho por el gral D. Diego Vargas Zapata*, 165 folios. Some of the papers are signed by Vargas.

page stands *Reconquista del Reyno de la Nueva Mexico, por Dn. Diego Vargas Zapata, 1692-5*, contains 471 folios of a character sufficiently well described by the title, part original, but more largely made up of copies.¹ In volume 41, *Documentos Colima*, is a copy of Governor Concha's instructions to his successor in 1794, which throw light on the state of affairs in Nuevo Mexico during his administration. Volume 52, whose title appears farther on, contains miscellaneous papers on that province, dated in 1775 and 1776.²

Besides the sources already mentioned, another considerable group of materials on Southwestern history is that dealing with missionary work and explorations, particularly in the far Southwest. The most considerable of these encountered will be indicated here in a general way. Volume 41 contains a number of papers, some original, relative to the Gila, Colorado, and California missions in 1771-1772. Volume 52, entitled *Expedientes relativos á reconocimientos en Rios del Norte, Conchos, Colorado, y Gila* is devoted largely to explorations in those regions. It contains, among other things, an original, apparently unprinted, though not unused, diary of Berrotaran, recording a journey made in 1729 to the Rio del Norte,³ as well as copies of the diaries of Garcés, Escalante, and Dominguez.⁴ Two copies were found of Salvatierra's well-known *Cartas*.⁵

¹Bancroft (*Arizona and New Mexico*, I 198, note) mentions a manuscript volume by nearly the same name in the archives at Santa Fé. This volume, like the one he cites, is divided (partly, at least) into *quadernos*, but appears to be incomplete. It may be that they contain the same materials.

²Papers signed by Brigadier Dn. Pedro F. de Mendieta, Miguel Constanco, Hugo Oconor, Sylvestre Velez de Escalante, and others.

³Other original papers are "*Quaderno 3º perteneciente á la expedición de la Junta de los Rios del Norte y Conchos*, dated 1748, and a diary of Dn. Jermin de Vidaure, 1747-1757.

⁴Bancroft (*Arizona and New Mexico*, 262) mentions *Diario y Derrotero*, by Dominguez and Escalante, as printed in *Documentos para la Historia de Mexico*, series ii, I 377 *et seq.* Another copy of Garcés's diary was found in volume 34. These copies are probably the same as his *Diario y Derrotero*, printed in *Documentos para la Historia de Mexico*, series ii, I 225, *et seq.*

⁵In volumes 34 and 36. They are printed in *Documentos para la Historia de Mexico*, series ii, I 103-157.

The above sketch is, of necessity, incomplete, and aims, particularly in the latter part, to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. But it may serve to indicate the nature of some of the apparently considerable material on Southwestern history, in the volumes examined, still largely unused.